FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE

About Peanuts

JAMIE had been to the circus, and had seen the elephants and the monkeys, and the horses with bareback riders, and lots of little trick dogs and ponies. Of course his father had bought him a bag of peanuts, all warm and snappy, and oh! so good! But Jamie was so busy watching things that he forgot to eat his peanuts, so of course he had a whole lot left.

He was home now with mother, talking over the wonders of the night before, and enjoying the rest of his peanuts. When they had talked and laughed about everything, from the trained seals to the funny clowns, Jamie looked into the peanut bag, which was almost empty now, and said, thoughtfully, "Peanuts! Now, mother, I'd like to know where these peanuts come from!"

So his mother said, "Peanuts, Jamie, grow in warm countries."

"Like cocoa?" Jamie asked, remembering the story about cocoa.

"They do not have to have as warm a place to grow as cocoa trees. Peanuts grow in the warm parts of this and other countries, where it does not get very cold at any time, for the plants are tender, and Jack Frost nips them very easily."

"Do they grow on trees, like walnuts?" Jamie asked.

"No, they grow in the ground, like potatoes," his mother answered.

"Now, Mother, I'd like to know where peanuts come from."

"How funny! Please tell me all about them."

"Well, the nut is planted in the ground—"

"Oh, couldn't I plant one of these?" Jamie interrupted.

"Those have been roasted, and would not grow, Jamie. The heat that roasted them killed the little life-germ in them that makes them grow. So your peanut would not take root.

"A peanut, then, that has not been roasted is planted in nice, warm soil. They grow best where there is lots of sand mixed in with the earth. Pretty soon the nut bursts open and tiny white shoots come out from it and poke their heads through the ground. Then they turn green."

"What makes them turn green?" Jamie wanted to know.

"The light," replied his mother. "It makes a green coloring matter in the young plant. Well, after a while, little round-shaped leaves begin to form and pretty soon there is a tender green peanut plant. Then the flowers come—but they bloom along the stems of the plant, instead of on the top. Then, when the petals drop off, the part that is left does a strange thing."

"What does it do?" asked Jamie, excitedly.

"Each little part that is left—called an ovary—pokes its head down into the ground and hides itself."

"What for?"

"Because it wants to make a peanut, and that is the way that God has willed that peanuts should be made. If the ovary cannot get into the ground, it just withers up and dies, for it can not make a peanut on the top of the ground.

There are dozens of flowers on each peanut plant, and each one of them makes a peanut. So that under the ground is a big bunch of peanuts growing and growing."

"How long does it take for them to get ripe?" Jamie asked.

"Not very long. From the time the peanut seed is planted until they are ready to harvest takes only a few months. Then, before it gets cold, the peanuts are plowed up out of the ground and in a few hours are stacked up in the fields in big piles—something like shocks of wheat—and allowed to dry."

"Oh, I'd like to see a field of peanuts!" Jamie cried. "Wouldn't it be nice?"

"I forgot to tell you that if the peanuts are grown in light-colored soil they will be light, and if they are grown in dark soil the shells will be dark."

"Oh, how funny!" Jamie said, looking at one of his nuts. "I guess these were grown in light-colored soil, then, for they are light."

"Yes," mother continued, "the light-colored peanuts bring the best prices."

"But, mother, why do you call them peanuts?" asked Jamie.

"Because they resemble a pea in several ways, Jamie. Some people, over the seas in Europe, call them ground nuts or earth nuts."

"Because they grow in the ground!" Jamie announced.

"Yes, but we call them peanuts because the plants look something like a pea vine, and because the nut itself is shaped something like a pea, but mostly because the nut contains a good many of the things that a pea does. Some people feed them to hogs to fatten them, and they make fine food, too—"

"There are lucky hogs," Jamie said, munching a nice brown peanut. "But tell me, what they do after the peanuts are dried in the field? Aren't they dirty?"

"Yes," mother replied. "The peanuts are picked off the vines—sometimes women and children do it, and sometimes it is done by machinery. Then the dirt is all knocked off by a big machine, and the peanuts are packed in 100-pound bags and shipped to the market. But they are raw, you know. The peanut men have roasters to roast the peanuts in."

"Oh, yes!" Jamie cried. "I have seen them lots of times! Let me go on with the story!" he begged.

"All right," smiled mother.

"Well, the peanut man roasts the peanuts and puts them into nice paper bags, and little boys and girls smell how good they are and ask their fathers or mothers for a nickel, and they buy the little bags of hot, roasted peanuts, and eat them right up!"

Jamie clapped his hands. "That story was almost as good as the circus," he declared.

"Oh, I'd like to see a field of peanuts," Jamie cried.

SOMETIMES.

WHEN nickels don't come plentiful
And papa seems to frown,
And people say that times are hard
Most all about the town—
It's then that I get wishing so
That I was born a queen
With diamond buckles on my shoes
The finest ever seen.

But queens are never really gay—
In fact I'm sure they cry,
And so I kiss my mother quick—
So glad that I'm just I!

INKSPOT

HE was a young crow only about eleven months old, but he thought he knew it all. He wore a suit of black, with a wonderful violet reflection, when he stood in the sun.

Inkspot was just about as big as mother. For a while, after he left the home nest up in the dark top of the pines, he and his brothers and sisters kept pretty well together. And, they snuggled up side by side, at night as

He lodged astride a limb.

close as they could get, and were fast asleep long before the older members of the crow colony had settled down for the night. He was one of the largest one of all his brothers and sisters, and the reason he outgrew the others was because when a youngster, he got more than his share of what his mother brought for them to eat; and, the way he got more to eat, was simply this—when one of his small brothers or sisters shut its eyes and opened its mouth, Inkspot would push the little one's head aside and open his mouth in its place.

So he waxed strong and lusty—all the while the mother crow was wondering why in the world the other children had such a pinched, starved look. Inkspot was always getting into trouble. One day, when he was about two weeks old, just as he was beginning to cut his tail feathers, he leaned a little too far over the side of the nest, to see what that old Bluejay was talking so loud about, lost his balance, and over he went.

He lodged astride a limb about three feet below the nest. It seemed to him he fell at least a mile before he brought up suddenly on the rough pinebark. His claws were not strong enough to grasp the limb, so he sat, just as he had fallen, looking for all the world like ten cents worth of dark red steak, stuck full of short, blue black matches.

He was afraid to move, for fear he would slide off into space, and the world below looked to him as if it were hundreds and hundreds of miles away. So, panting and gasping, he rode his branch until his mother came home with a small, wriggling field mouse, in her beak.

Five little black crow babies looked just like six little black crow babies to her, so she didn't sense that one was missing at all. A weak little squak from the hapless youngster caused his mother to fall backwards, from her perch, in her frantic haste to reach her darling. She hovered right below him and told him in her hoarse, discordant way, to slide! He slipped right off on her strong, broad back. Soaring and sailing, she paused just above the nest, and, a brisk shake, landed him—kerplunk! right on top of his smallest sister! He didn't pretend to move, but sat there, and opened his mouth and waited for the next field mouse his mother might bring.

Black quill feathers began to take the place of scattering, yellow down, and it was not many weeks before he was strong enough to follow the flock, as they went clanging away, in a long, black, straggling line to some nearby cornfield. He soon learned how to pull up the young corn and was vastly pleased to find the fat, white, seed grain at the end of the roots. One day, when they all were having the best sort of a time down in the cornfield, the old sentinel crow, who was posted on the tiptop of a tall pine, gave a warning cry as he fell off backwards.

Righting himself he flapped away towards the great woods by the river. The other crows instantly lost all interest in corn, and other things edible, and followed helter, skelter in the wake of their leader. Inkspot, saw nothing alarming in the long, quiet rows of sprouting corn, and he cast a glance of pity, mingled with contempt, at the disappearing crows, who were afraid, when there was nothing to be afraid of! Just then came a thundering bang!—bang! from behind the zigzag fence!

He caught a fleeting glimpse of drifting smoke—and the very corn sprout he was in the act of pulling up, was torn out of the ground by something that sizzed through the air, and it wasn't a bee, either. His two middle tail feathers—the long ones that he was so proud of, dropped to the ground, shattered and torn.

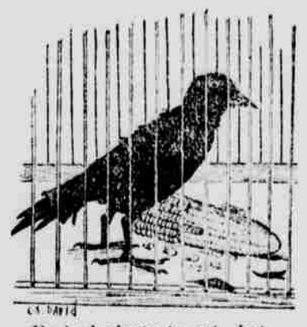
That there was something to be afraid of, and the old crows did have a little sense after all, were some of the thoughts that passed through his mind, as he pounded the air with his wings in a futile effort to fly faster than Nature ever intended a crow should. Reaching the home pines, out of breath, and out of humor—about the first crow he encountered was his sister—the one he sat on that day his mother dropped him back in the nest.

She squawked out, loud enough for everybody to hear: Why! Inkspot! What have you been doing with your tail? The two long middle feathers are missing!

He snarled back, in a way he had when talking with the family, that it looked to him like anybody with half sense would know that was the latest fad in tails, in up-to-date Crowdom!

Next morning he concluded he would not bother with corn any more, so he put in the day hunting bird nests. In a black thorn bush he found a thrush's nest, with five small speckled eggs. These he greedily devoured. Next, he ravaged the home of a timid Pewee, of four pink little baby birds. So quickly was the deed accomplished that the tiny babies went sliding down his big throat, with mouths still open, wondering what kind of a way that was their mother had for feeding Pewee youngsters! One day it occurred to Inkspot that a right young, fuzzy little chicken, tender, yellow legs, or a big Plymouth Rock egg, chock full of white and yellow goodness, would be a pleasant change in his bill of fare. So he betook himself to the oak grove back of a neighboring barnyard and silently waited his chance. He saw something that made his mouth water! In a corner of the fence were two big white eggs, right out in the open, with no old fussy hens in sight. Making sure the coast was clear, he flew down and investigated. A curious, coop-looking contrivance was tilted up, one end resting on an upright stick; one of the eggs was tied to another stick. Funny thing, to him, that they went to all this trouble when he would just as leave have his eggs plain, without all these fixings.

There was nothing slow or pokey about Inkspot, so he strode right under, and stuck his bill in the egg. Just then something happened that changed the whole course of his life! The curious coop-like concern fell when he touched the egg, and there he was, caught in one of the very traps his mother used to warn him against! And, he remembered how he used to caw-caw—and laugh at her fears! While he was calling himself all kinds of crow names for being such a heedless fool—a boy came running to the trap. Inkspot nearly had a fit, he was so frightened! He had, never, in all his life, been so near to one of these horrid humans! But, instead of killing him, the boy carried him to the house and put him in an old mocking-bird cage that hung on the back porch. From now on he had more than he could eat—but his heart was ever over in the pine grove where the crow colony clanged home in long black lines to roost when the afterglow of the sunset gave a splash of red to the bark on the western sides of the tree trunks.



He had plenty to eat—but—

WALKING STICKS.

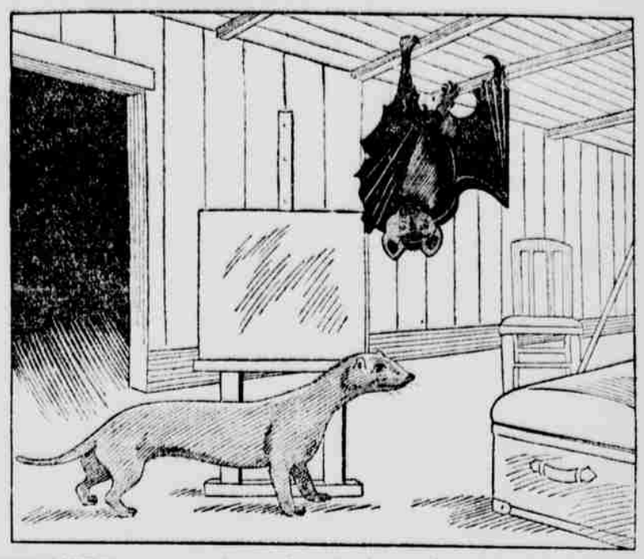
WALKING sticks have been used by men from Bible times down to the present age. These have come in all varieties from the plain staff to the gold and silver mounted ones according to the fancies and customs of the age.

When, in 1760, footmen attending gentlemen were forbidden to carry swords, these dangerous weapons were usually replaced by a staff with a large silver handle. This was called a Porter's Staff. Some thirty years later gentlemen began to discard their swords and to carry large oak sticks with thick knobs, whereon were carved ugly faces. Before long a competition arose between long and short walking sticks. A writer of that time describes the long ones as "leaping poles," while others preferred a yard of varnished cane. This latter is still in vogue, ornamented to suit the taste of the wearer.

AESOP'S RETOLD

by GARRETT NEWKIRK

THE BAT AND THE WEASELS.



THERE was one time a bat, who, a real acrobat,
Would remain through the day in the attic,
Where he hung by his toes, looking down at his nose
With an eye that was not astigmatic.
At times he would doze as he hung by his toes,

On a night, going out for his flying about,
He came to rest under an easel;
And, being quite slow on the ground as you know,
He was quietly caught by a weasel.
No time for a thought till he found himself caught.

Now helpless, ensnared, he begged to be spared.
Said the weasel, "I kill every bird."
"I'm no bird but a mouse, and I live in a house,
Every day, I will give you my word;
I have wings," said the Bat, "to escape from the cat."

So, being released instead of deceased
Imagine, again in a trice,
He was caught by another, the weasel's own brother
Who said, "I'm the foe to all mice."
(Remember that weasels are catching as measles).

Now the bat had his wits in available bits,
And replied without batting an eye:
"I am no more a mouse than a wren or a grouse;
Whoever knew mouses to fly?
With wings, not with talk, I escape from the hawk."

According to rules pedagogic
Again he escaped by his logic.

* * *

We're not out of way, perhaps when we say
Of this acrobat bat of the attic;
That whatever he claims to be, he was not, or aimed to be,
He certainly *was diplomatic.*

THE OAK AND THE CHERRY TREE

JUST how they came to be planted there nobody knew, but the great oak and the cherry tree stood side by side and the little children used to sit in the shade and make little cups out of the acorns. And when the cherries were ripe, what fun they had picking them from the smaller tree. But although the children used to come to the cherry tree the most, it was not happy for it saw the oak, which it loved dearly, leaning farther and farther away from it every day and although the cherry tree leaned the same way it never grew any nearer. And so the little cherry tree was sad.

One day it saw through the leaves some plum trees on the other side of the oak. "It must be that the oak thinks more of the plum trees than it does of me," it told the gardener. "Won't you fix it so that some plums will grow on me? I would be happy if I only had one plum," it said. So the kind-hearted gardener took some wood from the plum trees and fastened it to the cherry tree with wax and the next year it had plums as well as cherries.

Still the oak tree leaned farther away.

Then one day the little cherry tree heard the oak ask the gardener if he would make roses grow on its branches. The gardener said he could not and the little cherry tree was sad, for it thought the oak wanted to be pretty for the plum trees.

"I can stand it no longer," cried the cherry tree. "I think I will die." But the gardener who came past only laughed at the little tree for its foolishness. "Don't you see that the wind, on account of the ocean, always blows one way here?" he asked.

"I never thought of that," said the little cherry tree.

"Well, it does," he explained. "And that makes the oak and the plum trees and even yourself lean as you do. That always happens where the wind blows one way.

"I wanted to try and please you by making plums grow on your branches. I can make some fruits grow on different trees, but the fruits must be very much alike. I cannot make roses grow on an oak tree no matter how hard I try. One of the things I surely cannot do is to make the wind blow anywhere but where it wants to blow. But you can grow and, bye and bye, your leaves will touch the oak and you will be very happy again." "Then you don't think I will die of love?" sighed the little cherry tree.

"I never knew of a tree that did," laughed the gardener.

"I can stand it no longer," cried the cherry tree.

Overheard At The Table

ISN'T this room a little cold?" asked the Oil. "I feel a little congealed."

"I don't think so," said the Red Pepper. "I'm hot."

"Heigho!" sighed the Napkin.

"What's the matter?" asked the Fork.

"I'm wondering whether I'll ever grow big enough to be a tablecloth."

"You are very impudent," said the Big Spoon to the Little Spoon.

"Well, I can't help it," said the Little Spoon; "Jack used me when eating his cranberry sauce last night, and I'm naturally saucey."

"I think it's real mean!" sobbed the Dessert Spoon. "Here they're going to have rice pudding for dinner tonight, and I've got to go upstairs to give Jack his cod-liver oil. Ugh!"

"I was very much disappointed at dinner last night," said the Tablecloth. "I simply love currant jelly, and nobody spilled a bit of it on me."

"Come eat a piece of pie with me," said the Knife to the Soup-ladle.

"No, thanks," said the Soup-ladle. "I may be in the soup, but I never eat pie with a knife."

"Let's go to sea," said the Spoon to the Salt. "You are an old salt."

"That's so. But what'll we go in?" asked the Salt.

"The gravy-boat," said the Spoon.

"I hate soup," said the Soup-tureen. "And I hate toast," said the Toast-rack.

"Well, let's swap trades," said the Tureen. "You hold the soup and I'll hold the toast."

"I'd look well trying to hold a quart of soup, wouldn't I?" sneered the Toast-rack.

"I believe I've got a chill," said the Salt.

"Well, who wouldn't, living in a cellar all the time?" jeered the Olive-fork.

MAKE WAY FOR SPRING

"MAKE way! make way!" cried the lordly Year,
"For me and the prize I bring.
I found her under a snowdrift deep;
I caught her out of the arm of sleep.
The fair little stranger—Spring."

Are not these lines beautiful? The comparisons are perfect. The Year in its youth and vigor; the Spring a little baby stranger, awakening from under a snowdrift, come to claim its place in the world.

Who would not make way for the Spring! For who does not love this season, with its buds and flowers and birds? Sad, indeed, must be that heart which does not echo the notes of the warblers or reflect the glories of the spring beauties!

I have often thought that the new year should begin at Easter instead of in January, for Easter means "springing into life," and all the earth is new and young and happy. It seems to me to be the proper time to form your habits, and to make your plans for the year's work.

So much depends on the beginning—on the planting time—and the planting time is now. Loosen the soil of your new year's resolutions and see whether they have taken root. Watch them carefully, and be sure that they are planted where they will get plenty of sunshine, for without light and warmth and love they will not thrive.

A pupil was chatting with his teacher about "right living," and in the course of their conversation he asked, "What are the most important habits that a child should plant in his heart?" Without hesitation the wise man said, "Punctuality, accuracy, steadiness and dispatch; for without the first time is wasted, without the second mistakes hurtful to one's own credit may be committed, without the third nothing can be well done, and without the fourth opportunities of great advantage and of the highest importance are lost."

OUR PUZZLE CORNER

FIVE-LETTER DELETIONS.

1—Delete a letter from a musical instrument and leave a part of a feather; 2—Delete a letter from an alloy and find a fish; 3—Delete a letter from a small animal and find to think deeply; 4—Delete a letter from a boy's name and find crushes.

A FLORAL ACROSTIC.

My first is a white flower spelt with 5 letters.

My second is a flower of many colors spelt with 5 letters.

My third is a modest flower spelt with 6 letters.

My fourth is a Chinese flower spelt with 4 letters.

My fifth is a yellow flower spelt with 9 letters.

The first letters of each of these flowers spell the name of a Biblical King.

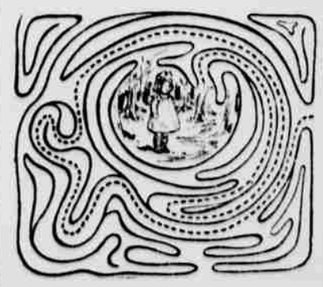
Answers.

FIVE-LETTER DELETIONS: Flute—Flue; Brass—bass; Mouse—mouse; James—jams.

FLORAL ACROSTIC: Daisy, Aster, Violet, Iris, Dandelion, David.

LITTLE LOST GIRL PUZZLE.

This little girl is lost in the woods. See if you can show her the way out.



Solution to Little Lost Girl Puzzle.